

A SCHOOL YEAR TO REMEMBER

Here are some high points at local institutions in the midst of some – shall we say? – very interesting times

Quite a class!

With Portia Egbu earning valedictorian honors and Brooke Alantz and Cameron Anderson sharing salutatorian honors, members of the 2020 graduating class at **St. Paul's Preparatory Academy** were accepted to 53 colleges/universities and offered \$1.1 million in scholarships.

UTA honors grads online

The **University of Texas at Arlington** honored its graduates last month with an online celebration, "Cheers! To the Class of 2020." The virtual event featured students' favorite memories and moments and recorded remarks from campus leaders.

UTA plans to invite its spring 2020 graduates for an in-person celebration when circumstances and health guidelines make it possible.

There were more than 6,000 graduates, with the newest graduates joining more than 230,000 UTA alumni. Included in that count is approximately 2,000 graduates of the College of Nursing and Health Innovation, 365 of whom are prelicensure nurses who will enter the workforce and help Texas' efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.



The faculty and staff at **St. Maria Goretti Catholic School** made special graduation deliveries to all the 8th Grade students after the COVID-19 pandemic cut the school year short – on campus, at least.



Here is the work of some talented **Arlington Classics Academy Middle School** artists.



St. Joseph Catholic School got creative with one of its traditions, and the students had a ball during "Totally 80's Virtual Field Day."



The entrance to **Arlington ISD's Wimish World Language Academy** got a face lift while students have been sheltering from home.

Arlington venues to host high school graduations

When the Arlington ISD originally announced it would hold its 2020 graduation ceremonies at the University of Texas at

Arlington's College Park Center, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) had not issued graduation procedures. Upon learning that ceremonies couldn't be held indoors, the district immediately began working on a new graduation strategy with Charlotte Jones, executive vice president and chief brand officer, Dallas Cowboys. They offered AT&T Stadium as a host site to Arlington ISD students and parents. The stadium's convertible roof makes the facility an outdoor venue that meets TEA guidelines.

"We are humbled and grateful to the Gene and Jerry Jones Family Arlington Youth Foundation and Charlotte Jones for their extraordinary expression of generosity," says Dr. Marcelo Cavazos, superintendent, Arlington ISD. "For our more than 4,000 seniors at seven high schools we know that being able to graduate in a beautiful location with their classmates and families present will be more meaningful than ever."



"This is a classic example of the Arlington way," says Arlington Mayor Jeff Williams. "When a problem presents

itself, our community works together and figures out a way to solve it. Our graduating seniors deserve to be celebrated and thanks to the creative thinking of the Dallas Cowboys and AISD, these seniors will get a graduation they'll never forget."

The 2020 Graduation Schedule:

June 5: Lamar High School, 3:30 p.m.
June 6: Arlington High School, 10 a.m.
June 6: Seguin High School, 3 p.m.

June 6: Martin High School, 8 p.m.
June 7: Arlington Collegiate High School, 10 a.m.
June 7: Bowie High School, 3 p.m.
June 7: Sam Houston High School, 8 p.m.

AT&T Stadium will be hosting in partnership with the Arlington ISD and the Arlington Fire Department to provide the safest graduation possible. Strict safety protocols will be in place for the ceremonies including health screenings and social distancing for all students and guests.

Mansfield ISD last month announced that in-person graduation ceremonies will be held for its class of 2020 seniors. Amidst the social distancing guidelines set due to the coronavirus outbreak, it was overwhelmingly clear that the desire of the MISD community was to hold a traditional ceremony as long as the proper safety precautions were taken.

To honor that wish and to ensure that a reasonable number of guests can safely and comfortably attend, the graduation ceremonies will be held at Globe Life Field in Arlington. The ballpark is the new home of the Texas Rangers that features a retractable roof.



June 2: Summit High School, 2:30 p.m.
June 2: Timberview High School, 7:30 p.m.
June 3: Lake Ridge High School, 9:30 a.m.
June 3: Mansfield High School, 2:30 p.m.
June 3: Frontier High School, 7:30 p.m.

If interested parties are unable to attend an in-person ceremony, all graduations will be streamed live at mansfieldisd.org/news-events/

[misd-tv-productions](https://misd-tv-productions.com). Information about the number of tickets per graduate and receiving tickets will come from the campus principal. Information about health screening protocols that will be conducted prior to entry can be found at shorturl.at/bcmt0. There will not be a separate graduation ceremony for The Phoenix Academy. Academy high school students will participate in their home campus graduation.

The 2020 Graduation Schedule:

June 2: Legacy High School, 9:30 a.m.



The Oakridge School's Cary joins science team

Madison Cary, an eighth-grade student at **The Oakridge School** was recognized by the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History and the University of North Texas Department of Learning Technologies as a Teen Technology Research Scientist. Cary joined 13 other Teen Technology Research Scientists on a project that investigated digital usage and the impacts of COVID-19 changes upon screen time.



42 students from Venture have graduated this year

Despite the school closure because of the COVID-19 pandemic, students from **Venture**, the district's high school for students who thrive in non-traditional settings, were able to graduate.

Eighteen students graduated from Venture in March. In April that number jumped to 24, giving the school 42 graduates since schooling returned with the At-Home Learning Hub.

"We've really worked with all our students, but especially our seniors who were really looking forward to graduating early or on time," Venture High School principal Greg Meeks says. "They were getting a little antsy as they were trying to catch up or meet their goals. Through our teachers supporting them and us being flexible, we've been able to get that done."



A drive-by graduation honored students of Primrose School of NE Green Oaks.

Mansfield Cares scholars

Each year, Mansfield Cares leads a project to award scholarships to deserving Mansfield ISD students. Recipients are chosen for their accomplishments, both academic and personal, their short essay of a given topic and their need for financial support to attend college.

This year's winners are: Kindall Keaton, Lake Ridge; JenniLee Johnson, Legacy; Erin Barrett, Mansfield; Ranya Ali, Timberview; Gregory Dey, Summit; Sabeen Al Bashiti, Lake Ridge; Bianca Nwaefulu, Mansfield; Kaylie Hert, Summit; Rolake Feyistetan, Timberview; Devon Cooper, Frontier; Zaid Rabbani, Frontier; Ernesto Rodriguez, Lake Ridge; Yuliana Fabela, Legacy; Macie Patterson, Mansfield; and Oscar Garza-Topete, Timberview.



MISD's Cantu chosen to COVID-19 task force

Mansfield ISD Superintendent Dr. Kimberley Cantu was chosen to be part of the School Superintendents Association (AASA) COVID-19 Recovery Task Force. AASA launched the advisory panel to provide assistance to district leaders as they grapple with the challenges caused by the coronavirus that forced the shutdown of tens of thousands of schools across the country. The task force consists largely of superintendents.

Photos courtesy of the respective schools

